

## CAIRO BULLETIN.

JOHN H. OBERLY, Editor and Publisher

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## THE DOLLAR WEEKLY BULLETIN

John H. Oberly has reduced the subscription price of the Weekly Cairo Bulletin to One Dollar per annum, making it the cheapest paper published in Southern Illinois.

## RAILROADS.

## ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT AND DIRECTORS OF THE

HOLLY SPRINGS, BROWNVILLE AND OHIO RAILROAD COMPANY

MADE DECEMBER 6, 1872.

To the Stockholders of the H. S. B. and O. Railroad.

Your president and directors take pleasure in reporting to you the progress, and what they conceive to be the interest and future prospects of the important enterprise committed to their charge.

Since your last annual meeting the work of clearing, grubbing, felling of timber and graduation on the first twenty-two and a half miles of road from Brownsville, north, let to Messrs. James Devaux & Co., on the 29th day of October, 1870, has been finished in a most satisfactory manner; and two more sections of the work let. On one of these, let to Mr. Robert Bailey, the work is progressing very satisfactorily. The other has been abandoned by the contractor, Mr. C. R. Johnson, and will require to be relet.

At your last annual meeting it was considered and decided that the regular stockholders meeting should be held the track would be laid and trains running on the first twenty or twenty-five miles of road. In this hope none shared more fully than did your directors. But circumstances unforeseen at that time, have prevented the road from being graded and the laying of the track. On one of these, let to Mr. Robert Bailey, the work is progressing very satisfactorily. The other has been abandoned by the contractor, Mr. C. R. Johnson, and will require to be relet.

If iron should decline soon, as we believe it must do, the companies that buy after the decline will have greatly the advantage of those that buy at present high rates, as they will have a much lighter debt to carry, less interest to pay and consequently more left as dividends to the stockholders. If, on the other hand, the present high prices should continue, there is still nothing lost but a little delay. And it is now believed by your directors, that even this delay may be turned to good account by our adopting a programme and securing connections not heretofore contemplated. In our paper two years ago we took occasion to say "that in our judgement, the enterprise more important to the future prosperity and importance of this road than all others is the opening of Lake Borgne canal. This project will virtually extend the Mississippi river to Ship Island and open up to the largest sized vessels one of the best, safest and cheapest harbors on the gulf. The harbor is situated nearly midway between New Orleans and Mobile, and must have direct communication by rail with the North, Northeast and Northwest. All of this can be accomplished by building a line of road from Ship Island through a country now desolate and without facilities to Holly Springs."

When the above was written we were looking forward to a connection north with the St. Louis and Iron Mountain railroad, an extension south through Somerville to Holly Springs, Miss., and the building of a road from that point south between the Central and the future roads to Ship Island harbor. This certainly would have made a magnificent line of road. But Fayette county failed to give that aid necessary to the Holly Springs extension, the enterprise as contemplated South of Brownsville was brought to a standstill and its future realization in our judgement has been forestalled by the development of their enterprise of a more practical character, which gives us an opportunity to secure connections with St. Louis and Ship Island much more direct and at a much less cost than the plan above contemplated.

A first-class three feet gauge railroad is now being constructed from St. Louis to Cairo on the Illinois side of the Mississippi river, and will be finished and in operation by sometime next spring. A road of the same gauge and character was commenced last March at Middleton, Tennessee, a point on the Memphis and Charleston road thirteen miles south of Bolivar, and has been finished and is now in operation to Ripley, Mississippi, a distance of about twenty-five miles, and has a fair prospect of being continued through to Ship Island harbor at an early day.

This will leave a gap of only one hundred and fifty miles from Cairo to Middleton to be filled, in order to complete a line of road of uniform gauge from St. Louis to one of the best harbors of the gulf, and the question now presents itself for our consideration whether it is better for us to adopt the three feet gauge and make one link on this great central artery of narrow gauge roads, connecting as it will the great future city of the Mississippi valley with one of the best and cheapest harbors on our gulf coast.

nearly perfect, and it did seem cruel for any one to make an innovation. But the innovation has been made and a much lighter and better system of roads has been introduced, and a great number of such roads have been built to demonstrate their practicability, their advantage and their disadvantage.

These roads have been called narrow-gauge because of a reduction of about two feet in width of track below the old standard gauge. But the name does not properly represent the system of roads. If the reduction in the width of track was the only departure from the old system the advantages would be few and small. But the narrow-gauge system is intended to be perfect in all of its parts.

As compared with the old broad gauge system the width of track is cut down about two-fifths and the weight of cross-ties, bridging, trestling, iron, nails and rolling stock, from two-fifths to one-half. In other words, it is a lighter road with lighter rolling stock, and consequently a cheaper road. There is a reduction of at least two-fifths of the materials out of which the road is constructed, and consequently a reduction of two-fifths of the cost of construction. And if the old system of roads with their width and weight approach proportional perfection, the new system must be reduced in width as well as in weight, in order to possess the same degree of perfection.

But the great saving of money resulting from the introduction of the narrow-gauge does not end with the building of the road. It is felt in equally as great a degree in repairing and operating expenses. If, in constructing the narrow in place of the broad-gauge road, two-fifths of the cost of cross-ties, bridging, trestling, iron and rolling stock can be saved the same proportion can be saved in replacing these materials, whenever these repairs become necessary. Besides it is believed that an iron rail weighing thirty-five pounds to the yard will last longer on a narrow-gauge road with engines weighing from fourteen to eighteen tons than a rail weighing sixty-five pounds to the yard will last on a broad-gauge road with engines weighing from twenty-five to thirty-five tons. The rapid wear of railroad iron is the result of laminating or battering, not of friction. Engines weighing from fourteen to eighteen tons laminate iron very little, while those weighing from thirty to thirty-five tons laminate it very rapidly, so in regard to operating expenses. Broad-gauge roads with heavy rolling stock must run heavy trains whether the business demands it or not. Consequently they must have carried over them an immense amount of dead or non-paying weight and that at considerable cost for fuel whether there be much or little business. It is the heavy engines that mash up and wear out the iron, yet they are made for the road and the road is made for them and they must be run though ten thousand pound engines and cars be run over the road for every one thousand pounds of paying load, and that at an enormous consumption of fuel. Not so with narrow-gauge roads and rolling stock. Light trains are run so as to suit the business at all seasons, and if during a part of the year an increase of business demands it, extra trains are put on.

The property of such a system of road has been recently extensively discussed by the best engineers both in Europe and in America, and as the result of such discussion the Russian Government, heretofore almost entirely without railroad facilities has adopted it and is now constructing quite a number of long lines. The narrow-gauge road in England with thirty years of experience in operating the best and some of the broadest roads in the world has adopted the narrow-gauge system for her vast India possession, number of such roads have been and are now being constructed in Europe, in Canada and in the United States; and Gen. Rosecrans, one of the best engineers of the age is now in Mexico, urging that government to adopt the same system as the one most likely to bring about the rapid development of the resources of that country.

The roads have been pronounced by competent engineers as being equally as safe as the broad-gauge roads, and the decision of such engineers has been sustained by the practical workings of the roads. They can be operated with a speed sufficient for all practical purposes, and with a rail weighing thirty-five pounds to the yard and plenty of rolling stock, have a capacity for doing more business than is now being done by any broad-gauge road south of the Ohio river. And if the business of such a road should even exceed its capacity, the earnings from so heavy a business would very soon double the cost of the road, and thereby secure the co-operation of the St. Louis and Cairo and the Middletown, Ripley and Ship Island narrow-gauge railroad companies. We feel very confident that the whole line of road from St. Louis to Ship Island harbor can be built very soon, and with such a backbone or main artery, we would have developed a system of narrow-gauge roads that would control a large share of the carrying business of Mississippi valley. Narrow-gauge branch lines much lighter than the system proposed through lines can be, and are being built. There are narrow-gauge branch lines now in successful operation with an iron rail weighing only sixteen pounds to the yard, and locomotives weighing only six tons.

Such roads connecting with a main line of first-class narrow-gauge roads, over which to send their loaded cars to markets of the country could do the business of any agricultural district for twenty, thirty or forty miles out from the main line of road. By adopting such a system the cost of construction can be brought down to the capacity of any part of southern country and railroad facilities can be dispensed to our sunny south almost as freely as the sun's rays. Already such a road has been commenced at this point and several others are in contemplation and will be built if we adopt for our road the gauge and make the connections discussed in this report. While during the last decade, steam has been so extensively utilized and the steam engine reduced in size, capacity and cost to meet the wants of almost every branch of industry, it seems strange that the railroad men of the country have been so slow in adopting a system of roads calculated to meet the wants of strictly agricultural districts. The great advantages of railroad transportation have been seen and felt in almost every community in our broad east.

But the cost of construction and the expense of operating, have been the great barriers in the way of extending these benefits to many parts of the country. The road was too big a thing for the business. Engines running saw-mills, could be constructed of a size suited to the amount and size of timber, in any given locality, or they could be constructed of a size suitable for running cotton-gins, wheat-threshers, printing presses, elevators and a host of other things; but railroad engines had to be huge monsters, and no people but those who had money and business, enough to justify an outlay of from twenty-five to fifty thousand dollars per mile could be permitted to have railroad facilities. But the innovation has been made, a step in the right direction has been taken, and thousands of the present generation will yet rise up and bless with great

ful hearts the men who first dared to meet public and scientific prejudice, and thrust before the world, always slow to believe and accept the truth of science, the great advantages of a cheap, light system of railroad adapted to the wants of every community in every land. In conclusion we most earnestly recommend that the stockholders at this meeting adopt for their road the three foot gauge, all of which is respectfully submitted. J. D. SMITH, President.

## COMMISSION AND FORWARDING.

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GENERAL AGENTS

FORWARDING AND COMMISSION

MERCHANTS.

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And Agents of

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Are prepared to receive, store and forward

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and contractors in lots of 50 barrels and upward, at manufacturing prices adding freight.

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R. A. CUNNINGHAM,

GENERAL COMMISSION MERCHANT

AND DEALER IN

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AND MILL FEED.

CAIRO, ILLINOIS

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MILLER &amp; PARKER,

GENERAL COMMISSION

AND

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Commercial-av, bet. 10th and 11th-sts.,

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